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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
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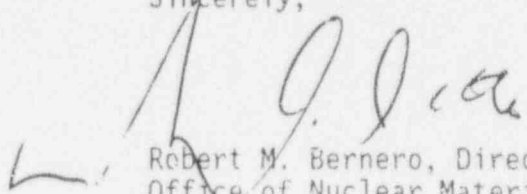
Frank Hanley, General President
International Union of Operating Engineers
1125 Seventeenth Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Hanley:

I am responding to your letter of June 28, 1994 to the Chairman, concerning your request that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission develop a comprehensive certification process for heavy equipment operators to ensure such operators have training in basic skills and techniques in the operation of heavy equipment for purposes of decontamination and decommissioning of nuclear facilities. The development of Federal occupational health and safety standards for heavy equipment operators falls under the jurisdiction of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). Therefore, NRC will not be developing the certification process, since we do not have responsibility for this matter. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) exists, between NRC and OSHA, relating to occupational safety at NRC-licensed facilities, and NRC inspectors refer safety concerns dealing with occupational health and safety to OSHA. States may also administer their own occupational health and safety standards.

Although NRC does not have responsibility, by law, for occupational health and safety, other than radiation protection aspects, NRC considers occupational health and safety impacts in establishing requirements and licensing nuclear facilities. For example, NRC has considered occupational impacts resulting from decommissioning, in the draft generic environmental impact statement (DGEIS) for the proposed rule on radiological criteria for decommissioning. NRC developed this rule through an enhanced participatory process, which included a series of public workshops involving a broad range of interested parties, including representatives of labor interests. This proposed rulemaking will be published soon in the Federal Register and the Agency welcomes comments on the proposed rule and supporting analysis in the DGEIS.

Sincerely,


Robert M. Bernero, Director
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

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